

REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 1-38 are pending, in which no claims are canceled, currently amended, or newly presented.

The Office Action mailed December 11, 2006 rejected claims 1-38 as obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103 based on *Dev et al.* (US 5,504,921) in view of *Ditmer et al.* (US 6,490,620).

The drawings were objected to because “the present drawings are hand-written.”

On April 5, 2007, Applicants’ representative telephonically communicated with Examiner Tran to alert the Examiner of the fact that this rejection was addressed in Applicants’ Preliminary Response filed on Dec. 3, 2003 along with the filing of the present continuation application. This rejection existed with the parent application 09/300,063 (now abandoned). During the telephonic communication, Applicants’ representative also pointed out the impropriety of the drawing objection, in which the Examiner agreed that submission of formal drawings upon notice of allowance would overcome the objection.

Additionally, Applicants’ representative contacted the Examiner’s supervisor, SPE Lo, on April 5, 2007, to understand why arguments in the Preliminary Response were not considered. SPE Lo indicated that the Examiner should have considered the arguments, acknowledging that this was likely an oversight and recommended merely referring to the Preliminary Response. SPE Lo also conveyed that the next Office Action, given the circumstances of the case, would not result in a final Office Action. Furthermore, SPE Lo asserted that the drawing objection is improper.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection, and refer the Examiner to the arguments proffered in the Preliminary Response of Dec. 3, 2003.

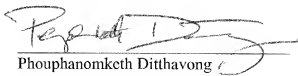
Additionally, as discussed with the Examiner and SPE Lo, the objection to the drawings should be withdrawn.

Therefore, the present application, as amended, overcomes the objections and rejections of record and is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration is respectfully requested. If any unresolved issues remain, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone the undersigned attorney at (703) 519-9952 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully Submitted,

DITTHAVONG MORI & STEINER, P.C.

4/11/07
Date


Phouphanomketh Ditthavong
Attorney/Agent for Applicant(s)
Reg. No. 44658

918 Prince Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
Tel. (703) 519-9952
Fax. (703) 519-9958